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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by guest Chaplain Rev. Brian Severin from Victory Christian Fellowship in Greeley, CO.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

May we all join our hearts in prayer.

Almighty Father, God of all creation, in the Name of our Lord Jesus, the author of salvation, I pray for each one of our Senators standing in this legislative gate, 100 of our Nation's best, in whose grasp is the throat of our fate. Give each of them Your wisdom amidst the confusion of our day. Help them embrace Superman's motto, bringing Truth and Justice, the American way. Protect their marriages and families, who are invaluable to each Senator's heart, and enlighten their children's generation with a genius redefining the term "smart." May a tidal wave of unity erase the line drawn in the sand. May our Senators lift their voices as one, again declaring "United We Stand."

Help us, the people, support our Senators, help them ignore our selfish whine. May each of them fulfill their calling, guiding us through the storms of perilous times.

Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK L. PRYOR led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 8, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PRYOR thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today there will be a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. The Republicans will control the first half and the majority will control the final half.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent to amend this consent to note that Senator ALLARD wishes to say a word about the gentleman who just served as our Chaplain. I ask that his time not be deducted from the minority time in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2284, a bill to restore the financial solvency of the National Flood Insurance Fund.

As a reminder, all amendments to the flood insurance bill must be offered today. Senators should expect rollcall votes to occur throughout the day as we work to complete action on the bill. I ask everyone to focus on the amendments and showing up in a timely fashion. We want to complete this as quickly as we can.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2991

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand that S. 2991 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2991) to provide energy relief, hold oil companies and other entities accountable for their actions with regard to high energy prices, and for other purposes.

Mr. DURBIN. I object to any further proceedings with respect to the bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Minority leader is recognized.

DEMOCRATIC ENERGY PACKAGE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reading the morning papers, we learned a couple of key points about the energy proposal introduced yesterday by our

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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